

# THE ARMY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PLANNING PROCESS

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*“The next war will not be fought with guns, but with computers in offices.”*

**Rep. Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY)**

*“The role information technology will play is a considerable one.”*

**Tom Ridge, Director  
Office of Homeland Defense**

## Introduction

DOD's vision for information technology (IT) was stated in October 1999 in the DOD Information Management (IM) Strategic Plan: “Information superiority achieved through global, affordable, and timely access to reliable and accurate information for worldwide decisionmaking and operations.” But how does the Army achieve this vision? The Army must find ways of bringing information services and technologies into operational and support missions. The Active Army, Reserve, and National Guard have different operational designs based on unique information needs. These three Army components must integrate their IT efforts to successfully achieve the DOD strategic vision.

## Goals

To accomplish this vision, DOD established four major supporting goals.

- *Become a mission partner.* Integrate IM with the national Defense mission using joint mission planning and analysis processes as the basis for defining information service and performance requirements.

- *Provide services that satisfy customer information needs.* Respond to management direction and mission requirements by delivering quality,

affordable products and services to IM/IT customers.

- *Reform IT management processes to increase efficiency and mission contribution.* Emphasize management process improvements that are needed to more effectively deliver information and services to DOD mission customers.

- *Ensure that DOD's vital information resources are secure and protected.* Reflect the pervasive impact of information assurance on DOD.

The DOD IT vision, mission, and goals were developed well before the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and they may not meet the current needs of the DOD and Army transformations efforts. A well-defined IT operations plan based on joint mission planning is the first critical step in realizing the vision.

Additionally, new technologies are needed to maximize the Army's resources. Only by properly planning, coordinating, and budgeting in a timely manner can the Army hope to achieve its ever-expanding missions at home and abroad. Also required is better understanding of how to link the Army's IM Plan to the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), the Joint Vision 2010 (JV2010), and the DOD IM Strategic Plan.

Further, there must be a shift in Army methodologies used to design and procure systems. In particular,

developing timely and cohesive strategies for acquiring information systems is just as important as the strategies used to acquire other weapon systems.

It is also important to note that the Army Chief Information Officer is addressing a number of issues that will impact the Department of the Army (DA) IM plan. Among these are how recent QDR changes will drive changes to the DOD IM Strategic Plan and therefore the DA IM plan; how the formation of the Homeland Defense Office and the Northern Command will influence the IM plan; and how the DOD and DA restructuring efforts will impact the plan.

## Resourcing

Aside from personnel and training, resourcing for IT is the Army's most costly investment. In the past, the lack of a cohesive IT operations plan made budgeting for the existing and newly proposed systems fragmented at best. With the increased concerns of homeland defense, the Army must develop a plan that defines how information systems will support core business processes. These information systems must be designed and procured in a timely manner, provide information rapidly, and contain intrusion safeguards.

A successful IM strategic plan will link the missions of the Army and subordinate commands with the DOD goals and objectives. This plan will result from the transformation and the expanding role of the Army in homeland defense. In its IM Strategic Plan, DOD outlines goals and objectives that provide overall guidance for managing information resources. The plan also establishes the DOD vision for IM, top goals and objectives, and strategies for accomplishing the goals.

Subdivision E of the 1996 Clinger-Cohen Act (CCA) mandates that the Army improve its day-to-day mission